

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A computerized method for natural gas distribution compliance management, comprising:
 - 5 maintaining a database identifying a plurality of compliance events and a plurality of resources;
 - providing a computer system including a main computer and a remote computer adapted to communicate with the main computer, at least a portion of a main program and the database accessible by the main computer, the remote computer accessing a remote program operative to display and modify only a remote portion of the plurality of compliance events and only a remote portion of the plurality of resources of the database;
 - periodically scanning the database to identify at least one of the plurality of compliance events requiring a response;
 - scanning the database to identify at least one of the plurality of resources to respond to the compliance event requiring the response;
 - 20 matching at least one of the plurality of resources with the compliance event requiring the response; and scheduling the resource to respond to the compliance event.

2. The method of Claim 1 wherein scheduling the resource to respond to the compliance event further includes:

5 sending the remote portion of at least one of the plurality of compliance events and the remote portion of at least one of the plurality of resources to the remote computer; and updating the compliance event with a completion information.

3. The method of Claim 2 wherein the remote computer is associated with at least one of the plurality of resources scheduled to respond to the compliance event and wherein the scheduling of the resource to respond to the compliance event is communicated to the remote computer.

4. The method of Claim 2 wherein the method further includes generating a report including the compliance events scheduled and the completion information

5. The method of Claim 2 wherein updating the compliance event with the completion information further includes updating a follow-up information associated with the 20 compliance event.

6. The method of Claim 2 wherein matching the resource with the compliance event includes associating a location of the compliance event with a location of the resource.

25 7. The method of Claim 2 wherein the plurality of compliance events are further defined as a plurality of cathodic protection events

- 33 -

8. The method of Claim 7 wherein the response is further defined as a date to respond to one of the plurality of cathotic protection events.

9. The method of Claim 7 wherein the response is
5 further defined as a numeric percentage associated with the plurality of cathotic protection events to respond to within a time-interval.

10. The method of Claim 7 wherein the method further comprises generating a report including at least one of the plurality of cathotic protection events responded to and a date the cathotic protection event was responded to by the resource.

11. The method of Claim 2 wherein the plurality of compliance events are further defined as a plurality of danger tag events.

12. The method of Claim 11 wherein the response is further defined as a reported unsafe condition.

13. The method of Claim 11 wherein the method further comprises generating a report including at least one of the plurality of danger tag events responded to by the resource.
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14. The method of Claim 2 wherein the plurality of compliance events are further defined as a plurality of service line events.

15. The method of Claim 14 wherein the response is
25 further defined as a date to perform one of the plurality of service line events.

- 34 -

16. The method of Claim 14 wherein the method further includes generating a report including at least one of the plurality of line service events.

17. The method of Claim 2 wherein the plurality of 5 compliance events are further defined as a plurality of poly-pipe events.

18. The method of Claim 17 wherein the response is defined as a date to perform one of the plurality of poly-pipe events.

19. The method of Claim 17 wherein the response is further defined as a numeric percentage associated with the plurality of poly-pipe events to respond to within a time-interval.

20. The method of Claim 17 wherein the method further comprises generating a report including at least one of the plurality of poly-pipe events and a date at least one of the poly-pipe events was responded to by the resource.

21. The method of Claim 2 wherein the plurality of 20 compliance events are further defined as a plurality of odorant injection events.

22. The method of Claim 21 wherein the response is further defined as a date to perform one of the plurality of injection events.

25. The method of Claim 21 wherein the method further comprises generating a report including at least one of the plurality of odorant injection events and a date the odorant injection event was responded to by the resource.

- 35 -

24. A computerized method of managing a compliance event for a natural gas distribution system, the compliance event including at least one of a cathodic protection event, a danger tags event, a poly-pipe event, an odorant injection event, and a service line scheduling event, the method comprising:

providing a computer system including at least a main computer and a remote computer adapted to communicate with the main computer;

maintaining a database including the compliance events and a plurality of resources, at least a portion of the database accessible by the main computer;

periodically scanning the database to identify compliance event requiring a response;

scanning the database to identify one of the plurality of resources to respond to the compliance event requiring the response;

scheduling one of the plurality of resources to respond to the compliance event requiring the response;

20 downloading to the remote computer the schedule of one of the plurality of resources to respond to the compliance event; and

uploading from the remote computer to the main computer a completion information associated with the resource responding to the compliance event.

25. The method of Claim 24 wherein the compliance event includes a priority and a unit.

26. The method of Claim 25 wherein periodically scanning the database to identify compliance event requiring a response

- 36 -

includes selecting the compliance event requiring a response based upon the priority.

27. The method of Claim 26 wherein identify one of the plurality of resources to respond to the compliance event requiring the response further comprises:

determining the unit associated with the compliance event;

identifying at least one of the plurality of resources associated with the unit of the compliance event requiring the response;

28. A compliance management system for managing compliance of a natural gas distribution system, the compliance management system comprising:

a main computer;

5 a remote computer adapted to communicate with the main computer;

a database accessible by the main computer, the database including a plurality of compliance events, a plurality of resources, and a plurality of units, each of the plurality of compliance event and the resources associated with at least one of the plurality of units;

a main program accessible by the main computer for maintaining the database, the main program including a scheduling program for scheduling one of the plurality of resources to perform one of the plurality of compliance events by selecting the resource having the unit substantially similar to the unit associated with the compliance event to be performed;

20 a remote program accessible by the remote computer and accessible by at least one of the plurality of resources for receiving from the main computer at least a portion of the compliance event to be

25 performed by the resource, the remote program having an interface operative to display and periodically update the portion of the compliance event to be performed by the resource such that when the main program is modified to operatively maintain the plurality of compliance events and the plurality of

- 38 -

resources, only the interface of the remote program is modified for the interface to operatively display and update the compliance event to be performed by the resource.

5 29. The compliance management system of Claim 28 wherein the plurality of compliance events are selected from a group of compliance event consisting of a plurality of cathodic protection events, a plurality of danger tag events, a plurality of poly-pipe events, a plurality of odorant injection events and a plurality of service line scheduling events.

30. The compliance management system of Claim 29 wherein each of the plurality of compliance events have a priority and a unit.

31. The compliance management system of Claim 31 wherein the priority of each of the compliance events is associated with a time-frame for responding to the compliance event.

20 32. The compliance management system of Claim 30 wherein the unit is further defined as one of a plurality of geographical areas associated with each of the plurality of compliance events and resources and wherein the scheduling program is operative to schedule based upon the unit associated with the resources to perform the compliance events.

25 33. The method of Claim 32 wherein the remote computer further defined as a laptop computer.

- 39 -

34. The method of Claim 32 wherein the remote computer further defined as a personal digital assistant.

35. The method of Claim 32 wherein the remote computer further defined as a wireless device.

5 36. The method of Claim 35 wherein the wireless device further defined as a wireless telephone.

37. The method of Claim 35 wherein the wireless device further defined as a pager.

38. A computer readable medium having executable instructions for performing a method for compliance management comprising:

maintaining a database identifying at least one compliance event and a resource;
scanning the database on a periodic basis to determine the compliance event to be performed;
associating the compliance event with the resource to perform the compliance event based upon a unit associated with both the compliance event and the resource;

20 scheduling the resource to perform the compliance event;
entering a completion information of the compliance event based upon completion of the compliance event by the resource; and

25 generating a report including at least one compliance event and a portion of the completion information of the compliance event.

- 40 -

39. The computer readable medium of Claim 38 wherein scheduling the resource to perform the compliance event includes:

providing a remote computer associated by the resource;

5 downloading to the remote computer the schedule of the resource to perform the compliance event;

displaying the schedule of the resource to perform the compliance event; and

performing the compliance event.

40. The computer readable medium of Claim 39 wherein entering the completion information includes:

entering completion information into the remote computer;

providing a main computer, the remote computer adapted to communicate with the main computer;

transmitting from the remote computer to the main computer the completion information; and

updating the compliance event with the completion information indicative of the compliance event being performed by the resource.

20 41. The computer readable medium of Claim 39 wherein generating the report includes:

creating a report including at least one of the plurality of compliance events and the completion information associated with at least one of the compliance

25 events;

printing the report on the main computer.